

**CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT**

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIFTH MEETING

THE UNIVERSITY
OF MICHIGAN

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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, DOCUMENT
on Tuesday, 11 February 1964, at 10.30 a.m. COLLECTION

Chairman

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU

(Romania)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. J. de CASTRO
Mr. E. HOSANNAH

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. LUKANOV
Mr. G. GHELEV
Mr. D. TEHOV

Burma:

Mr. James BARRINGTON
U SEIN BWA
U HTOON SHEIN

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS
Mr. S.F. RAE
Mr. A.E. GOTLIEB
Mr. R.M. TAIT

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. L. SIMOVIC
Mr. M. ZEMLA
Mr. T. LAHODA
Mr. V. VAJNAR

Ethiopia:

Ato Abate AGEDE
Ato S. TEFERRA

India:

Mr. R.K. NEHRU
Mr. A.S. MEHTA
Mr. K. NARENDRA NATH

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI
Mr. E. GUIDOTTI
Mr. S. AVETTA
Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

Mexico:

Mr. Ernesto de SANTIAGO
Mr. Manuel TELLO
Miss Ofelia REYES RETANA

Nigeria:

Mr. L.C.N. OBI

Poland:

Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN
Mr. E. STANIEWSKI
Mr. J. GOLDBLAT
Mrs. H. CHLOND

Romania:

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU
Mr. E. GLASER
Mr. N. ECOBESCU
Mr. C. UNGUREANU

Sweden:

Mr. P. LIND
Mr. P. HAMMARSKJOLD
Mr. J. PRAWITZ

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. S.K. TSARAPKIN
Mr. A.A. ROSCHIN
Mr. I.G. USACHEV
Mr. V.V. SHUSTOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. AHMED OSMAN
Mr. M. KASSEM
Mr. S.E. IBRAHIM

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

United Kingdom:

Sir Paul MASON

Mr. J.G. TAHOUDIN

Mr. J.M. EDES

United States of America:

Mr. W.C. FOSTER

Mr. A.L. RICHARDS

Mr. D.S. MACDONALD

Mr. R.A. MARTIN

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Romania) (translation from French): I declare open the one hundred and sixty-fifth meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. SLAHOVIC (Czechoslovakia) (translation from Russian): The Czechoslovak delegation welcomes the fact that, as part of the discussion on general and complete disarmament, the Committee has begun to consider the very important proposal of the Government of the Soviet Union that the so-called defensive "nuclear umbrella" should be retained to the end of the disarmament process (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1). As has already been rightly stressed by all delegations, we are concerned with a very important problem, the solution of which would help towards getting the negotiations on general and complete disarmament out of an impasse.

We all realize how great a threat to mankind is represented by the enormous stockpiles of nuclear weapons and means of delivery that have been built up in the world in recent years. On both sides there has been accumulated such a vast amount of destructive power that for every inhabitant of the earth there is the equivalent of dozens of tons of conventional explosive. To use the accepted jargon of Western military leaders and journalists, there is at present a multiple "over-kill capacity". Of course, mankind does not wish to accept and never will accept the dismal prospect of a nuclear catastrophe, and therefore it expects and demands, not new verbal assurances, but decisive steps to eliminate the threat of a nuclear war.

In the past our delegation has had several opportunities to point out here that the implementation of general and complete disarmament is a complicated task, since it affects the vital interests and security of all States. Further accumulation of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles, their constant improvement and further dissemination, would increase to an even greater extent the danger of a situation which is already highly dangerous. That is precisely why the need for an immediate solution of this problem through the earliest possible achievement of an agreement on general and complete disarmament has become a categorical imperative of today.

(Mr. Simovic, Czechoslovakia)

Although we have no intention whatsoever of underestimating the complexity of this problem, it is not in this complexity that we see the real and main reason why no progress has yet been made. Therefore we cannot agree with the view expressed by the leader of the United Kingdom delegation, Mr. Thomas, at our meeting of 21 January when he said that —

(continued in English)

"... there is no quick or easy solution to any of the disarmament problems with which we are confronted.

"That is the real reason why we have not yet made much progress."

(ENDC/PV.157, p.22)

(continued in Russian)

Our position is based on the necessity for general and complete disarmament. That is why in the field of disarmament we demand the implementation of decisive, effective and rapid measures, first and foremost in order to eliminate the threat of a nuclear war. That is precisely the aim of the Soviet draft treaty on general and complete disarmament (ENDC/2/Rev.1) and also of the proposal put forward at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations by Mr. Gromyko (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1), which we are now discussing.

In contrast to that, the basic concept of the West in regard to the question of disarmament consists in the desire to retain the possibility of waging a nuclear war and to maintain the so-called nuclear deterrent and the so-called military balance. But insistence on a nuclear deterrent and on a speeding up of the nuclear armaments race is far too shaky and dangerous a basis for the maintenance of world peace. This is realized even by some representatives of the West, who admit that the danger of war breaking out by accident is increasing more and more.

Political and military figures of the West, who have not yet freed themselves from the bondage of the old, out-of-date military and strategic concepts and from the old way of thinking, still oppose the demand for disarmament and want only the organization of "control over armaments". But if some leading figures of the West have already come to correct conclusions and to the realization that war in modern conditions, with the use of missiles and thermonuclear weapons, is no way to solve controversial issues, it would be natural and logical to expect that this

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realization would find its expression in the approach of the Western Powers to the problem of disarmament.

The Czechoslovak delegation is firmly convinced that a practicable way for the achievement of progress in the question of general and complete disarmament is opened up in the proposal of the Government of the Soviet Union, which was clearly presented and explained at our 163rd meeting by the representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Tsarapkin.

Permit me to make a few comments on that proposal. In our opinion, the Soviet proposal has, above all, the following advantages:

First, it meets the need for the speediest possible elimination of the threat of a nuclear war, namely, through the destruction of the means of delivery of nuclear weapons.

Secondly, taking into account the previous main objections of the Western Powers, which have been expressed here in the course of lengthy discussions on the question of eliminating the means of delivery, it opens up entirely new possibilities for a rapid solution of the key problem of general and complete disarmament.

As is well known, in the past the Western Powers have put forward against the proposal for the complete destruction of the means of delivery of nuclear weapons in the first stage, objections in regard to guaranteeing the security of States. They pointed out that, in the event of the means of delivery of nuclear weapons being eliminated, one of the sides might be able to conceal a certain quantity of such means of delivery and thus obtain a unilateral military advantage for a possible surprise attack. In such a case the State subjected to attack would have no effective means of defence. The proposal submitted by the Soviet Union for the maintenance of a "nuclear umbrella" until the end of general and complete disarmament (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1) deprives these objections of any foundation whatsoever.

Even if we admit that such guarantees of security in the form of a specific quantity of strategic weapons would be necessary, a question of principle immediately rises concerning the purpose which these weapons would serve. The gist of the problem is to ensure that both the categories and types of these weapons and their quantity should in no event make it possible to carry out large-scale aggression in order to achieve decisive military aims. On the other hand,

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these weapons, as a potential means of retaliation, should be an adequate safeguard against nuclear surprise attack.

The main feature of the Soviet proposal for the establishment of a "nuclear umbrella" is that it has an exclusively defensive character. It maintains the guarantees of security demanded by the West until the very end of the process of general and complete disarmament. It creates a situation in which, because of the possibility of a retaliatory or "punitive" blow, aggression could never give the aggressor the desired result, even in the case of a surprise attack. In such a situation --- and we regard this also as an extremely important feature of the Soviet proposal --- even the very threat to use nuclear weapons as a means of achieving political aims would have no sense or foundation.

In the light of all these circumstances, it becomes obvious that the means of delivery which would remain at the disposal of the United States and the Soviet Union until the very end of the process of general and complete disarmament must be minimal in quantity. Hence the Soviet proposal rightly provides that the Soviet Union and the United States should retain an agreed and strictly limited number of intercontinental missiles, anti-missile missiles and missiles in the "ground-to-air" category, as well as a corresponding number of nuclear warheads, which would be located exclusively in their respective national territories.

In this connexion I should like to remind you of the words of the representative of Canada on 4 February. Referring to the similarities and differences between the Soviet proposal and the Western position, Mr. Burns said, among other things:

(continued in English)

"It is agreed that some nuclear weapon vehicles should be kept until the final stage ..." (ENDC/PV.163, p.14)

(continued in Russian)

Using a metaphor in which he compared the strategic means of delivery which would be retained within the framework of the "nuclear umbrella" to a club or cudgel, he said:

(continued in English)

"Of course the Canadian delegation agrees that the fewer clubs of this kind there are the better ..." (ibid., p. 15)

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(continued in Russian)

We cannot but agree with such a statement — which, as we understand it, expresses the need to retain a minimal quantity of means of defence —, since it fully corresponds with our ideas concerning the quantity of such weapons.

In the case of guarantees of security, the Soviet proposal also meets the earlier demands of the Western Powers in respect of strict international control. It provides that these weapons should be subject to strict control from the very beginning of the second stage, and at the launching pads themselves. This proposal in itself provides an adequate guarantee of reliable international control.

Moreover, in connexion with the problem of control, it is impossible to ignore the fact that measures connected with the maintenance of a "nuclear umbrella" would be taken within the framework of the rest of the disarmament and control measures, as provided for in the draft treaty on general and complete disarmament, for the first and second stages. There is no need to repeat that the implementation of all the measures for the first and second stages would substantially help towards improving the international atmosphere and strengthening confidence among States.

In our opinion, the fear lest some State, in carrying out the agreed measures, might try to conceal some of the missiles and nuclear warheads which are to be destroyed under the treaty is absolutely groundless. Given the existence of the "nuclear umbrella", such weapons could not give a potential violator any decisive military advantage. On the other hand, such activities would be accompanied by tremendous risks.

It is also impossible to overlook the fact that, owing to the rapid "obsolescence" of the weapons in question, their maintenance in a serviceable condition would be extremely difficult from the technical point of view and would require an extremely wide production basis. Since the Soviet proposal envisages for the first and second stages extensive control measures in respect of the production of the corresponding types of armaments, it seems practically impossible that any activity connected with maintaining the serviceability of concealed weapons or, indeed, the clandestine production of new weapons would escape the attention of international control. I should like to remind you what effective and comprehensive international control is provided for in the Soviet draft treaty, of which article 5, paragraphs 2 and 3 read as follows:

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"2. The production of all kinds of rockets and pilotless aircraft and of the materials and instruments for their equipment, launching and guidance referred to in paragraph 1 of this article shall be completely discontinued. All undertakings or workshops thereof engaged in their production shall be dismantled; machine tools and equipment specially and exclusively designed for the production of such items shall be destroyed; the premises of such undertakings as well as general purpose machine tools and equipment shall be converted to peaceful uses. All proving grounds for tests of such rockets and pilotless aircraft shall be demolished.

"3. Inspectors of the International Disarmament Organization shall verify the implementation of the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 above," (ENDC/2/Rev.1, p.6)

Having weighed up all the aforementioned circumstances, the Czechoslovak delegation considers the proposal to transfer the "nuclear umbrella" to the third stage to be an important point of departure which would open up a wide and practicable path for the solution of other problems of general and complete disarmament. In accordance with this evaluation, at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Mr. Vaclav David, in his statement of 21 September 1963 in the general debate, said:

"We welcome the new proposal as another demonstration of the consistent and sincere efforts of the Government of the USSR to solve the question of general and complete disarmament. We wish to voice our hope that the Western Powers will also take such a stand in future talks which would enable the attainment of an agreement". (A/PV.1211, Provisional, p.28).

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The Soviet proposal was highly evaluated by many other delegations at the eighteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly, including the delegations of a number of States members of our Committee, which described it as the most important step to have been taken in the field of general and complete disarmament since the very beginning of our Committee's activities.

The proposal of the Soviet Government also met with widespread response and support in the most extensive circles of world public opinion. This is shown by the many statements and documents of such important international conferences as, for instance, the eleventh Pugwash Scientific Conference, which took place in September 1963, and the twelfth, which has just come to an end at Udaipur in India, as well as the eighth Round-Table Conference which was held in December 1963. It is noteworthy that all the participants in these conferences, among whom there were some outstanding public figures, scientists and military experts, expressed their unanimous approval of the proposal to maintain the "nuclear umbrella" until the end of the third stage.

Bearing in mind that several months have already elapsed since the proposal was submitted and that, apart from a few general comments, the Western Powers have not yet begun any businesslike consideration of it, it would be desirable that they should begin the discussion of it immediately, especially as the proposal is, in fact, the answer of the Government of the Soviet Union to the demands and objections which they themselves put forward in the past against the original Soviet draft treaty on general and complete disarmament (ENDC/2).

The main points of the proposal for the maintenance of a "nuclear umbrella" during the implementation of general and complete disarmament are formulated clearly and unequivocally, in regard to the types and categories of the armaments which would remain at the disposal of States, as well as in regard to the purpose they would serve, the time-limits during which they would remain intact, their location and the method of control.

In view of the previous demands of the representatives of the Western Powers, the question which arises most urgently is whether the delegations of the NATO countries now agree to leave to the United States and the Soviet Union, in the form of a so-called defensive "nuclear umbrella" until the end of the disarmament process, an agreed and strictly limited number of specific types of missiles with

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nuclear warheads, which would be located in the territories of both great Powers and would be placed under strict control? If they do agree, the way lies open for further negotiations on this key problem of the whole programme of general and complete disarmament.

Sir Paul MASON (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom delegation, like other delegations, welcomes the Committee's decision to devote discussion at our Tuesday meetings to general and complete disarmament (ENDC/PV.157, p.38), and also the fact that we have already resumed consideration in that context of the problem of the destruction of nuclear delivery vehicles.

Today I propose to consider, in fairly general terms, where we stand on that problem. In so doing I shall say at the outset that I have found myself in very considerable agreement with the thoughtful and constructive statement made by our Canadian colleague at our meeting last Tuesday (ENDC/PV.163, pp.12 et seq.) I also want to make some preliminary comments on the statement, also made last Tuesday, (ibid., pp.18 et seq.) by our Soviet colleague on Mr. Gromyko's latest proposals put forward at last year's session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I agree fully with our Czechoslovak colleague in holding -- I am not trying to quote his exact words -- that this problem of the destruction of nuclear delivery vehicles lies at the very heart of the whole problem of disarmament. Therefore I find it hard to understand why Mr. Simovic took exception (Supra, p. 6) to the observation made some days ago by the leader of my own delegation, Mr. Peter Thomas, that no quick or easy solution of the problem of disarmament was to be anticipated (ENDC/PV.157, p.22). It depends upon what is meant by a solution. The solution which Mr. Thomas had in mind was a solution through the process of negotiation, and by "negotiation" he meant the process of adjusting different points of view after the Committee had been vouchsafed full elucidation of those points of view. From that angle, I must say, I think it is clear that we still have a long way to go. We in the United Kingdom delegation look forward to serious and businesslike discussions along the lines suggested by the representative of Nigeria on 24 January. We share his hope that during these discussions the parties concerned

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will provide the necessary clarification of the measures they have proposed. Without such clarification it will obviously be impossible -- if I may repeat Mr. Obi's apt words -- to evaluate such measures "for all they are worth". (ENDC/PV.159, p.11).

I must say that I wish that our Soviet colleague's statement last Tuesday on Mr. Gromyko's latest proposals (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1) had been more substantial, and I do hope that Mr. Tsarapkin will elaborate those proposals for us at future meetings. My delegation will study carefully the observations just made by the Czechoslovak representative to see whether they in fact throw what I might perhaps call any sidelights on those proposals. I am bound to say, however, that I do not, upon first hearing, feel very optimistic -- but one never knows. At any rate, I shall say that the United Kingdom delegation remains ready and willing to evaluate any serious proposals put forward in the Committee, provided that we know what we are being asked to evaluate.

The Committee has already held at previous sessions lengthy discussions on the question of nuclear delivery vehicles. Those have not yet resulted in specific agreements. Nevertheless I think they were useful in a number of respects. Firstly, they showed clearly that we are all agreed on our basic objectives. They showed that we are all agreed that -- to quote from the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles:

"... the programme for general and complete disarmament shall contain the necessary provisions, with respect to the military establishment of every nation, for:

...

(c) Elimination of all means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction" (ENDC/5, p.2).

That is the aim on which we are all agreed. Secondly, our previous discussions provided both the United States and the Soviet Union with an opportunity to outline the measures in their disarmament plans relating to the elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles. Those measures were then discussed by the Committee. The value of that process has already been demonstrated by the fact that both plans were subsequently modified. Each side, of course, still considers that its own measures would provide the best way of putting into practice our agreed aim. We now have to reconsider the measures proposed by the two sides and to decide which are the most likely to lead us to our common objective.

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As I have said, we are agreed upon what we want to do. That is, we want to eliminate all nuclear delivery vehicles from the arsenals of States. That is the agreement in principle which has already been established. What we have now to do is to try to agree on how to do what we have agreed we want to do. I do not underestimate in the least the difficulties we still have to resolve. For example, we still seem to be a long way from agreement on the shape and the size of the nuclear deterrents to be retained by both sides during each stage of the disarmament process. We have not agreed on the rate and the phasing of destruction of nuclear delivery vehicles during that process; nor have we agreed yet on the peace-keeping arrangements which will have to be introduced and in operation before national nuclear deterrents can be dismantled.

Those are some of the many factors -- the verification question is another -- which will ultimately have to go into the equation which we are all trying to resolve. I do not propose to elaborate those factors today. I may wish to do so at later meetings. But we must not overlook the fact that, as our Canadian colleague pointed out on 4 February, there is already a certain amount of agreement on how we are going to abolish nuclear delivery vehicles (ENDC/PV.163, p.14). What we now need are agreements on specific, detailed and, above all, practical measures regarding the reduction and elimination of such vehicles.

I believe that the right approach is to begin by considering those areas where -- in my own view at least -- there has been a slight narrowing of the gap between the positions of the two sides.

Let us first consider the measures contained in the United States draft treaty outline (ENDC/30 and Corr. 1 and Add.1,2,3). As we all know, that plan envisages what, in our view, would be an orderly reduction of all nuclear delivery vehicles from the levels existing and, indeed, frozen at the beginning of the disarmament process. That steady reduction to progressively lower levels of power throughout that process would be achieved by roughly equal percentage cuts across the board in all three stages.

Of course I know well that our Soviet colleagues have many times objected in this Committee that that method would be too slow; that it would not get rid of the threat of a nuclear war quickly enough. Mr. Tsarapkin repeated that objection on 4 February. The Western programme for disarmament, he said, "provides for the elimination of the nuclear menace at the slowest possible rate" (ENDC/PV.163, p.19).

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We all understand the desire of our Soviet colleague to get rid of the threat and the danger of nuclear war just as soon as we can; and I, for one, certainly do not wish to quarrel with it. But the speed with which we can do so depends on a number of very important factors. One such factor is whether we can devise and set up, in the place of national nuclear deterrents, a better method of preserving international peace and security.

I want here to take note of a brief but interesting remark by our Soviet colleague on 4 February which suggested that he too recognizes that there is an intimate link between the retention and abolition of national nuclear deterrents and the problem of international peacekeeping. He claimed that under Mr. Gromyko's latest proposals "the question of the means for maintaining peace during the disarmament process ... would also be very much simplified." (ibid., p.21) We are in no position yet to judge the validity of that claim, but it ~~does~~ seem to imply that our Soviet colleague now agrees with us that the balance of nuclear deterrent power, however much we may deplore the fact, does help to keep the peace in the world today and, at lower levels, could help to keep the peace during the disarmament process. Our Brazilian colleague made much the same point at our meeting of 21 January when he reminded us that, as a result of the development of nuclear weapons, a new political consciousness had emerged in the world which, to quote Mr. de Castro's own words, had rendered war "senseless and impossible" and had made "an absolutely essential necessity of peace". (ENDC/PV.157, p.35)

That being so, the conclusion to be drawn is that it could be potentially very dangerous to abolish all nuclear weapons and their delivery systems until peace could be preserved and guaranteed by a better method. Our Soviet colleague's remark which I have just quoted suggests that he may agree with that conclusion. It is clear that none of us wants to live with the threat and the danger of nuclear war any longer than we must. That is the common ground between us all. The problem is just how long must we live with that threat and danger, and just how soon can we get rid of it. It seems from what our Soviet colleague told us last week that the common ground between us here may be broader than any of us could have expected, for example, this time last year. Let me explain.

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"Under Mr. Gromyko's latest proposals, as I understand them, the Soviet Government has now declared its willingness, however reluctant, to continue to live with the threat and danger of nuclear war throughout the disarmament process. Our Soviet colleague maintained that the missiles which, under his Government's latest proposals, would be retained until the end of stage III would provide both the United States and the Soviet Union with "an extremely weighty guarantee of security in the form of the capacity to deal a nuclear counter-blow against an aggressor" (ENDC/PV.163, p.20). Mr. Tsarapkin reminded us that his Government was proposing that the United States and the Soviet Union should retain in their hands "a minimum quantity of missiles with nuclear warheads" (ibid.). Later in his statement he explained that the proposed retention of intercontinental ballistic missiles "would also be a deterrent" (ibid., p.22).

Perhaps I may digress for one moment by considering what we mean by a nuclear deterrent. We all recognize that a nuclear deterrent which did not involve the possibility of one country's inflicting unacceptable damage in retaliation on another would not be a valid deterrent. In other words, a nuclear Power which was unable to threaten "a nuclear counter-blow against an aggressor" -- to repeat Mr. Tsarapkin's own words just quoted -- could not claim possession of a valid nuclear deterrent. According to our Soviet colleague, the purpose of his Government's latest proposals would be to deter any government from violating the peace and making an aggressive move during the disarmament process. The reason why governments would apparently be deterred from such action would be that -- and I quote our Soviet colleague again -- "the aggressor would have to pay a high price for such an act" (ibid., p.21). That high price could presumably only be unacceptable damage caused by retaliatory nuclear blows.

What our Soviet colleague did not tell us was just how high a price would, in the view of the Soviet Government, be required to ensure --- and to ensure beyond any possible shadow of doubt -- that no government would ever be prepared even to contemplate paying it in any conceivable situation. I must say that I am sorry about that. Instead, Mr. Tsarapkin suggested that it was for the Western Powers to give their views first. But these are Soviet proposals, not ours. Our Soviet colleague already has our views about what numbers of nuclear delivery vehicles might be retained in all three stages of disarmament. That being so, I feel sure that the Committee will agree that it is for him to elucidate his Government's own proposals under this head.

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But the point I want to emphasize now is that the Soviet Government has advanced proposals which seem to call for the retention of some kind of nuclear deterrent by both sides throughout the whole disarmament process. As the then British Foreign Secretary said in the General Assembly on 1 October 1963, this does seem to remove one of the objections to the Soviet Government's proposals of 1962 (A/PV.1222, provisional, p.28-30).

It is clear that under our Western percentage approach the threat of nuclear war will exist, as Mr. Tsarapkin himself has often pointed out, throughout the disarmament process, though of course at progressively lower levels until zero is reached. The effect of this threat would be to maintain the peace. Under Mr. Gromyko's latest proposals, the same threat will apparently be maintained throughout the whole disarmament process. According to our Soviet colleague, the effect would be the same: that is, the maintenance of peace. The conclusion to be drawn, I think is that the basis of our Soviet colleague's main objection to the Western plan has now lost much of its validity because the possibility of nuclear war will also exist, under their own proposals, until the end of the third stage. The methods by which a system of mutual deterrence will exist under the two plans still seem to be very different. Until we know more about Mr. Gromyko's latest proposals, we cannot judge exactly what the differences might be. But both plans now seem to permit the retention of the power of nuclear retaliation as a deterrent, however this is to be done, throughout the disarmament process. So we may have here something like common ground on this all-important question, or, to use Mr. Tsarapkin's own words, a "common platform" and a "common language" (ENDC/PV.163, p.28).

Incidentally, I must say that I was somewhat puzzled by our Soviet colleague's insistence last Tuesday that before we can move forward we must reach "agreement in principle on the substance of the proposal to retain a 'nuclear umbrella'" (*ibid.*, p.27). If Mr. Tsarapkin meant "on the basis of Mr. Gromyko's proposals", then of course we may find it difficult to move forward on this basis alone, because we do not yet have any precise idea of what these proposals would entail. They must be examined like any other proposals; neither they nor any other proposals can be assessed, let alone accepted or rejected, before their full details have been made available and scrutinized. I recall, Mr. Chairman, that

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your own predecessor as leader of the Romanian delegation, our friend Mr. Macovescu, in his very carefully-argued statements was fond of introducing a Latin phrase from time to time, so that you will perhaps allow me to suggest that the argument that we should take a leap into the dark by accepting proposals which are still obscure to us in a number of important respects reminds me of the old Latin legal maxim caveat emptor. I believe that thought was behind suggestions made, for example, by the representative of the United Arab Republic in his statement in the First Committee at the last session of the General Assembly, namely, that Mr. Gromyko's proposals will require a great deal more elucidation before the Committee can assess them (A/C.1/PV.1319, pp. 12 et seq.).

I do wish, therefore, that Mr. Tsarapkin would not make acceptance of these proposals a prior condition to forward movement. If he had merely argued that before we can move forward we must agree on the need for both sides to preserve nuclear deterrents at progressively lower levels throughout the disarmament process, then I should have been able to say to him that on this issue there was some common ground between us.

In any event, I believe that both sides may be slightly closer together than hitherto on the sort of situation which might be reached towards the end of that process; but we are still very far from agreement on how to arrive at that situation. In particular, we have not yet resolved our wide differences on how to phase the reduction of nuclear delivery vehicles in the preceding part of the disarmament process, especially in stages I and II.

I hope, therefore, that our Soviet colleague will help us to move forward by "clarifying the details" of his Government's own proposals (ENDC/PV.163, p.27). Until these details are forthcoming we cannot even begin to assess the differences between our own proposals and the Soviet proposals regarding the phasing of reduction of nuclear delivery vehicles, let alone attempt to bridge the gap. Let me assure Mr. Tsarapkin again -- indeed, let me assure the Committee as a whole -- that the United Kingdom delegation will be prepared to play a full part in forthcoming discussions on this vital problem, as we did at an earlier stage.

Mr. FOSTER (United States of America): I listened with a great deal of interest to the statement made this morning by our Czechoslovak colleague. I hope that after further study of that statement we too shall find additional light on Mr. Gromyko's proposals which were put before us in detail by Mr. Tsarapkin last week (ENDC/PV.163, pp. 18 et seq.). I also listened with great interest to our United Kingdom colleague. I shall touch on a number of the same points which he has discussed, and I hope that in this way we can elicit from our Soviet colleagues further light on what is an interesting proposal.

Like the two preceding speakers, we welcome the opportunity to return to discussion on the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles and conventional armaments, and on measures of nuclear disarmament. This morning I wish to consider first the United States position on some of those subjects. Then I will set forth some of our views regarding the new proposal by Foreign Minister Gromyko. This was described to us by our Soviet colleague at our meeting of 4 February (ibid.).

The United States would begin the disarmament process with President Johnson's proposal for a freeze on the numbers and characteristics of strategic nuclear vehicles (ENDC/120). This proposal would curb a deadly and costly area of the arms race. It could be effectively verified by less burdensome procedures than those necessary for general and complete disarmament --- for example, by inspection of such activities as production and testing. It would be a proposal of major significance, for it would halt the race for more and better strategic nuclear vehicles. Yet it could be accomplished in a reasonable period of time and before the first stage of general and complete disarmament.

Stage I of the United States disarmament plan would broaden this freeze on strategic nuclear vehicles to include production limitations on all major types of armaments (ENDC/30 and Corr. 1 and Add.1, 2, 3). Conventional armaments, such as tanks and armoured personnel carriers, would be added to the armaments covered, as would "dual-capable" weapons, such as fighter aircraft, non-strategic missiles, and cruisers.

Also in stage I all major armaments would be reduced across the board to 70 per cent of the level existing at the beginning. In stage II these armaments would be reduced to 35 per cent, in stage III to zero. All other armaments would be reduced beginning in the second stage.

(Mr. Foster, United States)

A key provision of the United States plan is that reductions would take place on a percentage basis throughout the three stages. This procedure is designed to reduce all armaments in national forces in an even, balanced relationship. These reductions would be spaced over each stage of disarmament. Each stage would bear a nearly equal burden of the reductions.

To illustrate the "how" and "why" of the United States plan, let us take a simple example. Suppose one side had one hundred of a particular type of long-range missile and the other had seventy of a missile of similar range. In the first stage, the side with one hundred would have to give up thirty, and the side with seventy would lose only twenty-one. The numerical difference between the two sides would be less in absolute terms at the end of the stage. However, the ten-to-seven ratio with which they began would still exist. Thus, if you have more, you lose more, but the balance between the two sides remains the same. In the United States plan, this process would continue until the completion of disarmament.

This, of course, is a much over-simplified example. One cannot look only at numbers of one type of missile in determining whether balance exists. My example ignores other types of missiles and weapons where numerical superiority may be on the other side. One must consider all major armaments to determine the military relationship between the two sides. Moreover, my example assumes that two missiles of similar range are equivalent. That is not the case if the warhead sizes are different. It is not the case if one side has an anti-city targeting plan and the other an anti-missile targeting plan. It is not the case if one side has much more concentrated populations or missile pads than the other. Other examples of the same sort can be introduced. For these reasons, numbers alone do not determine balance.

I think both sides accept the fact that a rough sort of balance does exist today. That seems to be the point of Chairman Khrushchev's and President Kennedy's agreement that, if a nuclear exchange took place between their two countries, the living would envy the dead. In this connexion our Secretary of Defense, Mr. McNamara, recently described the threat to the United States in this way:

(Mr. Foster, United States)

"... given the kind of force the Soviets are building, including submarine-launched missiles beyond the reach of our offensive forces, the damage which the Soviets could inflict on us and our allies, no matter what we do to limit it, remains extremely high ...

"We must recognize that strategic nuclear war would under all foreseeable circumstances be bilateral -- and highly destructive to both sides."

It is agreed, therefore, that a rough balance of destructive power exists now between the two sides.

At our meeting on 4 February the Soviet representative questioned whether there was any method by which one could determine that the balance at any point was exact (ENDC/PV.163, pp. 21,22). We do not know any such method at the present time. Each side, however, presumably has designed its own defence system to meet its own needs. That is how the present balance was achieved. If every major type of armament in the defence system of each side is reduced by equal percentage at the same time, the present rough balance would be retained throughout the disarmament process. That is the simplest, the fairest and the best way to ensure that neither side gains a military advantage over the other during the process.

If disarmament is to succeed, it is essential that no country believe that it has been placed at a military disadvantage as a result of unbalanced reductions. That is the purpose of point 5 of the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles (ENDC/5). To make progress towards our goal we must make sure that disarmament does not decrease the security of any State.

Towards the conclusion of his remarks on 4 February, the Soviet representative described the USSR proposal as providing --

"... for the retention of a limited number of missiles in the territories of the Soviet Union and the United States during the entire disarmament process ..." (ENDC/PV.163, p.27)

The United States plan also provides for the retention of agreed quantities of missiles to the end of the third stage. In this respect, the Soviet Union has moved in the direction of agreement, just as President Johnson's proposal for a freeze on strategic vehicles seems to us to move in the direction of agreement. It is not clear, however, how far the Gromyko proposal goes in this direction.

(Mr. Foster, United States)

As I have said, we propose stage-by-stage straight-line reductions of missiles, as well as of all other major armaments. This will result in the retention of decreasing percentages of these weapons throughout the disarmament process. We have not been told whether the Soviet plan provides for these stage-by-stage reductions. By implication, however, it appears that the Soviet proposal would eliminate all other nuclear delivery vehicles and provide for steep reductions in land-based intercontinental missiles to some very low level on both sides by the end of stage I. That level would then be continued to the end of disarmament. If that is so, we appear to be rather far from agreement. The principle of balance would be, if I may say so, out the window; and the first stage would be much overburdened.

As I indicated earlier, balance depends upon many things in addition to the number of intercontinental missiles on each side. The rough balance now in existence cannot be maintained by cutting these missiles immediately to a very low level while at the same time eliminating all other nuclear delivery vehicles. That would ignore differences other than between the numbers of intercontinental missiles which exist between the two sides.

Because of these differences, the Soviet proposal would seem to modify in favour of the Soviet Union the mix of armaments to be retained after the first stage. Moreover, it would apparently eliminate in that stage nuclear delivery vehicles upon which the West has come to rely more than the Soviet Union seems to. Those eliminated include, for example, missile-launching submarines.

The interesting point made by the Soviet representative was that the retained missiles would serve as a deterrent throughout the disarmament process. He seems to have overlooked the fact that not only are the types of weapons important, but their invulnerability also is important. Therefore hardening or mobility can be crucial in ensuring a secure deterrent.

The Soviet Union's theory for the retention of land-based missiles was stated at the meeting of 4 February as follows:

(Mr. Foster, United States)

"If one were to place oneself in the position of a State which does not wish to renounce its nuclear weapons in the very first stage of disarmament because it fears it might be cheated by another State, the missiles retained by agreement would give such a State an extremely weighty guarantee of security in the form of the capacity to deal a nuclear counter-blow against an aggressor. An aggressor would not be able to destroy the means for dealing a counter-blow which would be retained by the other State, the victim of aggression, because in order to put a modern intercontinental missile out of action it is not enough to aim at it, say, one or even two or three intercontinental missiles."

(ENDC/PV.163, p.20)

If land-based intercontinental missiles are invulnerable in this way, so, for example, are the submarine-based missiles possessed now by both sides. This was a point made in the statement which I quoted from Secretary McNamara. We see no reason to treat such missiles differently from land-based missiles. Under the United States plan they would not be so treated.

There are other similarities and differences between the United States plan and the new Soviet proposal. In the case of verification, for example, the Soviet Union would permit control at the launching pads themselves, at least from the beginning of the second stage. We welcome that as a move in the right direction. However, it would not permit control at the launching pads during the first stage, as would the United States plan.

There has been no indication yet concerning how the Soviet plan would provide assurance against hidden launching pads or vehicles. If, for example, one side suspected that the other was retaining some delivery vehicles in violation of the agreement, what kind of inspection would be allowed under the Soviet proposal? In this connexion the Soviet representative said last Tuesday that, if missiles were retained to the end on both sides --

"... the problem of mutual mistrust ... during the disarmament process would be virtually eliminated". (ibid., p.21)

This seems to suggest that, in his view, inspection is not necessary for solving the problem of mutual mistrust. Apparently for similar reasons, he suggested that "greater simplification" (ibid.) of peace-keeping machinery would be possible under the Soviet plan. If that is the correct interpretation of the Soviet position, the

(Mr. Foster, United States)

United States cannot agree. The problems of peace-keeping and verification remain unchanged.

As I have already indicated, our plan also would provide for retention of missiles on both sides to the end of the disarmament process. Yet the United States outline provides for the gradual strengthening of verification effectiveness and peace-keeping machinery as disarmament progresses. That is because we feel that the threat posed by hidden nuclear vehicles and weapons will increase as the arms on both sides approach zero. It is also because, as they approach zero, effective means other than national forces must be found for ensuring that all disputes between States are settled peacefully. Neither verification nor peace-keeping machinery can be built overnight at the end of the process.

Those, then, are some of our agreements and some of our disagreements with the Soviet proposal. We agree with the principle of retention of agreed missiles on both sides throughout the disarmament process. But this agreement does not signify that we are close to agreement on any disarmament measure.

The Canadian representative listed many other agreements on principle which we in the West have with our Soviet colleague (ENDC/PV.163, p.14). I might also add to Mr. Burns's list all the principles stated in the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles (ENDC/5) and perhaps others as well. But I subscribe to his view that such agreements do not always lead to agreement on disarmament measures. We need agreement on specific proposals as well as on general principles, in order to move ahead.

I hope that at coming meetings we shall be able to explore and develop common areas of approach. In doing so I will touch upon both those issues which unite us and those where we differ.

My delegation looks forward to the clarification of the Soviet proposals which was promised us at the meeting of 4 February (ENDC/PV.163, p.27). In the meantime we will continue to seek areas of agreement on concrete measures.

The CHAIRMAN (Romania) (translation from French): I should now like to speak in my capacity as representative of the Romanian People's Republic, in order to expound my delegation's position at this stage of the negotiations on the problem of general and complete disarmament.

(The Chairman, Romania)

I wish, first of all, to associate myself with the view expressed here that our work is now being resumed under better auspices than in the past. Moreover, in our opinion -- and if I have understood them correctly, in the opinion of the United Kingdom and the United States representatives too -- the principal factor enabling our Committee to make a greater contribution to the creation of a climate more propitious to a détente and to promoting a better understanding is the agreement, unanimously expressed at the beginning of this session, to negotiate a draft treaty on general and complete disarmament -- which remains our main task -- accompanied by measures aiming at the same goal, namely the so-called collateral measures.

Our delegation intends to state its views on collateral measures at the meetings specially reserved for the examination of that problem. As to general and complete disarmament, that problem, which is of such vital importance to the security of all countries, has now been before our Committee for nearly two years. Those two years **which** have elapsed are evidence of the consistent endeavours that have been made to find a common platform. Although we cannot yet talk of results, we cannot deny the fact that during those two years we have made some progress of a nature to open up better prospects for bringing our positions closer together.

In our opinion, the most significant factor which emerged during that period was the well-known proposal advanced by the Soviet Union that the two nuclear Powers should retain in their own territories a limited number of inter-continental missiles, anti-missile missiles and anti-aircraft "ground-to-air" missiles until the end of the process of general and complete disarmament (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1). The Romanian delegation notes with satisfaction that this initiative has been the focus of attention, which testifies once more to its significance for the progress of our negotiations.

The importance of this question has already been emphasized here. I shall take the liberty of quoting the statement made on 31 January by the representative of India, Mr. Nehru, in which he said:

"We consider this to be an important contribution which should help to speed up our work on the drafting of a treaty". (ENDC/PV.162, p.13)

(The Chairman, Romania)

The representative of Burma, Mr. Barrington expressed a similar view. His words have already been quoted during our discussions, but they seem to me to be so apt that I hope I shall be forgiven if I recall them again:

"The offer of the Soviet Union to extend the so-called nuclear umbrella to the end of the third stage of the disarmament plan ... constitutes, in our view, the most important move that has yet been made in the field of nuclear disarmament since the Soviet and United States disarmament plans were submitted at the beginning of the deliberations of the Eighteen-Nation Committee". (ENDC/PV.161, p.8)

We cannot but endorse Mr. Barrington's idea, namely that -- and here I quote again:

"We believe it to be the urgent task of our Committee to explore the possibilities of advance which this move opens up". (ibid).

The Nigerian representative, Mr. Obi, said:

"It is our sincere hope that this further Soviet amendment, which now makes negotiations on this most important aspect of nuclear disarmament more possible and which is made largely in response to Western criticisms, will receive the serious consideration ... which it justly deserves." (ENDC/PV.159, p.10)

I have also noted with interest some of the statements made by our Western colleagues. Thus in his statement of 30 January the United Kingdom representative, Mr. Peter Thomas, said:

"Although we have discussed these already at some length, we would certainly see advantage in going back ... to debate the revised proposals of the Soviet Government on what has been described as the retention of the nuclear umbrella throughout the disarmament process." (ENDC/PV.161, p.21)

The Italian representative, Mr. Cavalletti, said:

"They [the proposals] deserve the most careful consideration in the light of the Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations (ENDC/5)". (ENDC/PV.157, p.31)

(The Chairman, Romania)

The representative of Canada, Mr. Burns, also made a point of listing certain aspects of the problem on which, in his opinion, agreement had already been reached. In this connexion he said:

"It is agreed that they [the nuclear weapon delivery vehicles] should all be done away with in the final stage of disarmament."

(ENDC/PV.163, p.14).

We note with satisfaction that one of the Western delegations agrees that, once the third and last stage of the disarmament process has been completed, there should be no nuclear arms delivery vehicles of any kind, and, of course, no nuclear arms.

We should be most happy if all the Western Powers, including those which have not yet spoken on this proposal, could now signify their agreement that, once the process of general and complete disarmament has been concluded, not a single atomic weapon or nuclear weapon delivery vehicle should remain in existence or be produced, just as there would no longer be any kinds of weapons of mass destruction.

What can be deduced from those statements?

In the first place they show that the Soviet proposal, by its content and because it takes into account the point of view of the other side, offers a suitable basis for negotiations. It is certainly desirable that those elements should be made use of with a view to a constructive examination of the problem we have before us.

Our task is to determine the content of the initial stage of the process of general and complete disarmament, a stage which will be decisive in establishing conditions conducive to the smooth development of the process. On this score, as has already been emphasized here on more than one occasion, the socialist delegations are firmly convinced that the first objective should be to eliminate the nuclear threat once and for all and in the shortest possible time.

It is with this aim in mind that the Soviet proposals have been formulated, and that a proposal has been made to destroy the nuclear weapon delivery vehicles at the first stage of the disarmament process and to retain, in the conditions with which we are familiar, the so-called "nuclear umbrella". As you know, this proposal was made with the idea of meeting the other side half-way.

(The Chairman, Romania)

We think the time has now come for us to define our positions with regard to the very essence of this proposal. Once these positions have been defined, it will be much easier to settle the details of this problem on the basis of a common platform. As far as our delegation is concerned, we are still of the opinion that the best solution would be to destroy all nuclear arms, as well as all nuclear weapon delivery vehicles, and that this should be done at the very first stage of the disarmament process. Unfortunately, it appears that the conclusion of an agreement to this effect would be difficult at present.

By replying to the fears expressed by the Western Powers, the Gromyko proposal has, in our opinion, the merit of meeting the other side half-way, thus making it easier to bring the two positions closer together. It aims at eliminating the danger of an atomic war at the very start of the disarmament process, which would correspond to the interests and desires of all nations. In supporting the Gromyko proposal, we express our conviction that it might break the deadlock in the negotiations on general and complete disarmament and give them a new impulse in the direction of an agreement.

I know that certain apprehensions have been voiced about this proposal. Only today we listened with great attention to the statements made by the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States of America. But I must admit that none of these fears appear to me to be justified. In the past our Western partners have expressed the fear that the elimination of the nuclear weapon delivery vehicles at the beginning of the process of disarmament would give a military advantage to the States signatories of the Warsaw Treaty because of their superiority in armed forces and conventional arms.

That was one way of presenting the matter. But now the same partners in the negotiations present it very differently. In this connexion, I should like to refer

(The Chairman, Romania)

to a statement made by Mr. McNamara, the United States Secretary for Defense, on 18 November 1963, to the Economic Club of New York, in course of which he said:

"Throughout most of the fifties ... the picture underlying most policy debates remained that appropriate to 1949. It was a picture of a Communist Goliath in conventional strength facing the Western David, almost denuded of conventional arms but alone possessed of a nuclear sling."

Has not an attempt now been made to present a similar picture within the framework of our Committee? And what is being said now? Let us continue to quote Mr. McNamara's views:

"The announced total of Soviet armed forces for 1955 was indeed a formidable 5.75 million men. Today that figure has been cut to about 3.3 million. The Warsaw Pact total, including the Soviets, is only about 4.5 million. Against that, it has today the members of NATO, whose active armed forces number over 5 million. The ground forces of the NATO nations total 3.2 million, of which 2.2 million men are in Europe, as against a Soviet ground combat forces total of about 2 million men, and the Warsaw Pact total of about 3 million.

"Both the Soviet Union and the US forces of course include units stationed in the Far East. In Central Europe, NATO has more men, and more combat troops on the ground, than does the bloc. It has more men on the ground in Western Germany than the bloc does in East Germany. It has more and better tactical aircraft, and these 'planes on the average can carry twice the payload, twice as far as the Soviet counterparts." (Department of State Bulletin No. 1277, 16 December 1963)

It will be seen that these statements completely invalidate the fears that nuclear disarmament might place the Western Powers at a disadvantage.

Certain apprehensions have also been expressed with regard to control. We do not intend to examine today the details of this problem, which preoccupies the socialist countries at least as much as it does the other side. The problem of control presents itself in exactly the same way as the disarmament problem. We are all agreed that general and complete disarmament must take place, although we have not yet reached agreement on the way this process will be controlled.

(The Chairman, Romania)

Let us agree that all nuclear weapon delivery vehicles, apart from the known exceptions, should be eliminated at the first stage. As to the implementation of this measure, it will be necessary and possible to establish beforehand appropriate and generally acceptable measures under strict international control.

As has already been rightly stressed at our last meeting, neither the proposal on the maintenance of a "nuclear umbrella" nor the question of its control can be understood and examined outside the context in which they were submitted -- that is to say, separately from the rest of the programme of measures relative to the first stage of the process of general and complete disarmament. The main thing is not to transform the problem of control, which should promote disarmament, into a problem which is apt to hinder it.

As far as our own delegation is concerned, we have always been and are still in favour of strict control over all disarmament measures. It goes without saying that control should be in proportion to the volume, nature and importance of the disarmament measure to which it refers. Control is essentially subordinate to the measure which it helps to put into force. If control goes beyond those limits, it risks hindering disarmament rather than promoting it.

The problem of the balance of forces, which has been dealt with at some length by Mr. Foster today, (Supra, pp. 19 et seq.) like the problem of control, constitutes, after all, merely one aspect of a larger problem -- that of the security of States during the process of disarmament. It is not the first time that this problem has been raised during the disarmament negotiations.

The question was also raised in the days of the League of Nations. It will be recalled that at that time the idea of the security of States during the process of disarmament, although excellent in itself, was transformed into an obstacle to disarmament under the influence of the triple slogan: "Disarmament, security, arbitration". Thus arose the well-known vicious circle: "I am not disarming, because I do not feel safe. I do not feel safe, because there is no disarmament".

We all recognize that the problem of maintaining the security of States during the process of general and complete disarmament, with all its political, military and legal aspects, is a very acute one. But it is also obvious that the idea of security should assist disarmament and not delay or frustrate it.

In our opinion the Gromyko proposal offers a supplementary element of security without placing either of the parties at a disadvantage. It takes into account both the role and the special responsibility which belong to the great nuclear Powers in connexion with the consolidation of peace and security, the accomplishment of nuclear disarmament, and the disarmament process in general.

It would seem to us, therefore, that no objections can reasonably be raised against the Soviet proposal. However, this proposal encounters another obstacle: explanations are being asked on points of detail. In this connexion, the Soviet Union representative, Mr. Tsarapkin, at the meeting of 4 February, gave important explanations which, in our opinion, justifiably impressed the delegations here (ENDC/PV.163, pp.19 et seq.). Certainly the importance of the concrete aspects of the problem before us should not be underestimated. However, there seems to be little point in discussing details so long as the Western Powers have not given their reply on the essence of the Gromyko proposal. According to international practice, the parties first come to terms on the substance of the agreement they have in mind, and only afterwards go on to a detailed examination.

Among the many examples which come to mind, I should like to recall resolution 1378 (XIV) of the General Assembly of the United Nations, dated 20 November 1959, on "General and complete disarmament". It is a document which expressed the agreement of all States Members of the United Nations on the principle of general and complete disarmament. In 1959, however, there was no agreement on the details about how general and complete disarmament was to be brought into effect, about its stages, their duration and content, the methods of verifying whether undertakings had been carried out, and so on. This in no way prevented the Member States from proposing jointly and adopting unanimously that historic resolution, nor did it prevent them from coming to an agreement in principle on general and complete disarmament.

The normal method of work is to pass from the essential to the secondary. In our opinion, the important thing is to work out an agreement in principle on the Soviet proposal, after which we can proceed to the examination and negotiation of other relevant questions. That is how the desired progress can be made.

I should like to conclude by emphasizing that the Romanian delegation attaches particular importance to the work of preparing a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control. The truly radical solution, capable of eliminating the threat of a world conflagration, is general and complete disarmament, for the accomplishment of which tireless and resolute efforts on the

(The Chairman, Romania)

part of all States and peace-loving peoples are essential. From this stems the important role which devolves on the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, from which the peoples expect a greater contribution than before and positive results.

At this stage in the examination of the problem of general and complete disarmament, I should like to express the hope that, in circumstances which are taking a turn for the better, our Committee should leave behind the discussions in this field which took place at our last sessions and go on to fruitful negotiations which take due account of all interests and all points of view, thus making it possible to progress on the road towards general and complete disarmament.

We intend to study with the greatest attention every constructive proposal, every factor capable of leading to an agreement on this matter which is of such immense importance to all peoples and all States. The problem of general and complete disarmament is undoubtedly one of the most difficult problems humanity has ever had to face. Nevertheless, with good will, patience, perseverance and a spirit of co-operation, this problem can and must be solved.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 165th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador V. Dumitrescu, representative of Romania.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Czechoslovakia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Romania.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 13 February 1964, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.